Style Guide for HealthMetrics handbook

Why do we need a Style Guide?

A company style guide has several purposes:

- It is designed to make sure that everyone who writes documents for the company writes in a consistent and clear manner.

- It helps to ensure a continuous brand experience for everyone which avoids our company sounding like it has multiple personalities from one department to the next.

- To ensure contents are well-organised so that they are easy to find.

This style guide is a resource to assist you to create documentation with a focus on points that are preferred by the company.

What is our style?

We are a young, innovative and dynamic company and our documentation should reflect these qualities. Our documentation should be easy to read, accurate and friendly. We write code that is efficient and not over-complicated; our documents should be the same. In the same way that we constantly improve our product, this style guide will be modified whenever it is necessary. Feel free to make suggestions.

Voice and tone

Use a conversational tone when writing. Your writing should sound like a conversation between two people rather than simply presenting information. Write in short sentences, avoiding long words and complicated instructions. Shorter is always better. Write in the second person. This requires the use of the pronouns you, your and yours. For example:

- To make lemonade, you add the juice of lemons to water and sugar.

- You need to prepare a wall before applying primer.

- Just do it.

For you, the experience should be informal, conversational and informative. The reader should feel as though they are listening to the writer explain the concepts to them. Always remember that you have an international audience and many of your readers are not native English speakers. However, some of you may be writing for technical professionals so you can assume that they will have programming knowledge and the specific vocabulary for programming terms.

Avoid using future tense

In some non-English languages the concept of future tense is not the same as in English. Using future tense can make your documents harder to read. Additionally, when using the future tense, the obvious question is when. So, if you say "Learning PowerShell will be good for you" - the obvious

question for the reader is when will it be good? Instead, just say "Learning PowerShell is good for you".

Headings
Use sentence-style capitalisation for headings. See [Microsoft - Capitalisation](#).
Always capitalise the first word of a heading. See section below on **Capitalisation**.
Content headings should be second-level headings and below. First-level headings are reserved for page titles.

Heading styles
Always use heading styles (H1, H2, H3 etc) to define a section of a document. This will help with creating the table of contents.

Capitalisation
Don't use all uppercase for emphasis. It's rude and looks like you're shouting. Use sentence-style capitalisation. That means everything is lowercase except the first word and proper nouns, which include the names of brands, products, and services.
Occasionally, title-style capitalisation—capitalising most words—is appropriate. For example, product and service names, the names of blogs, book and song titles, article titles in citations, white paper titles, and titles of people (Vice President or Director of Marketing) require title-style capitalisation. For more on this checkout [Microsoft - Capitalisation](#)

Language

HealthMetrics uses formal Malaysian English (en-MY, not to be confused with Manglish) as we are a Malaysian company. Malaysian English originates from British English but also includes words or phrases from American English. However, British English spelling will take priority over American. Although we are a Malaysian company, we have an international audience. Many of our readers are not native English speakers and may not have the vocabulary that you have. Always remember that you should write in a language that is familiar to your intended audience.

Some do's & don'ts

- Don't use profane or derogatory terms.

- Don't use slang when possible.

- Don't create acronyms. Uncommon acronyms create unnecessary confusion. There are some exceptions such as well-known acronyms (USB, FAQ, URL, CEO).

- Do use technical terms carefully. Don't assume everyone can understand technical terms. If you use them, define them in context and use them consistently.

- Don't use jargon. See [Microsoft - Avoid jargon](#).

- Don't use idioms - To "have bitten off more than you can chew" is an idiom that means you have tried to do something which is too difficult for you.

- Don't use colloquial expressions - a colloquialism is a word or expression that is commonplace within a specific language or geographic region.

- Don't use culture-specific references. They can be confusing for non-native English speakers and hard to localise. Consider the worldwide implications of what you write. Customers in other locales may not know much about the history and culture of your country.

- Do use contractions such as it's, you'll, you're, we're, let's.

- Don't be ambiguous

Spelling

As a Malaysian company we use British English spelling, however, you are recommended to set your proofing language within Microsoft Word to English (Malaysia). It is good practice to check the spelling and grammar in your document and resolve any issues highlighted. Watch out for American English spelling mistakes such as:

| American English	British English
favorite	favourite
analyze	analyse
color	colour
localize	localise
center	centre
organize	organise

Spellcheck & Grammar

Documents containing spelling mistakes and bad grammar reflect poorly on the image of the company. The code for our product depends on every detail being absolutely correct and even a comma in the wrong place will cause havoc. Our documentation should be equally as exacting so please use **Spellcheck** and **Grammar** tools whenever you write any company documentation.

You can use **Grammarly** or **Microsoft Editor** for basic spelling & grammar checks.

For those using the Microsoft 365 Business Standard license issued by HealthMetrics you have Microsoft Editor Premium version.

Date format

HealthMetrics hires great people regardless of where they live. With an international audience, it is important we actively prevent convention ambiguity. We prefer to use the [ISO 8601 format](#) when formatting date. E.g.:

1. ☐ 2021-10-22 (yyyy-mm-dd)

2. ☐ 12/10/2021

3. ☐ 12/10/21

Procedures (How to write instructions)

A procedure is a sequence of logical steps for accomplishing a task.
There are many rules to consider whenever writing instructions/procedures but they are all designed **to assist the understanding of the reader**.
There is an art to writing clear and concise instructions for someone to follow to complete a task.

Read the following guide before you even try to write procedures:
[Procedures (How to write instructions)](#)

HealthMetrics Handbook

This site is the home for all HealthMetrics documentation covering our company, products, processes & tools. All contents in HealthMetrics handbook are strictly **internal-only**.

Page editor
This site has 3 options for editing:

1. ☐Markdown (Plain Text Formatting)

2. Code (Raw HTML)

3. Visual Editor (Rich Text WYSIWYG)

Please Note: The preferred option is **Markdown** - see the reasons why at [Why use markdown?](#)
Markdown is a simple markdown language using plain text formatting syntax. This page was created using Markdown Editor. Learn how to use Markdown using our [Markdown guide](#).

Page organisation
The pages in HealthMetrics handbook are organised by their paths, unlike the traditional folder structure where you have to create a folder and drop the file in. When you create a new page, you have to enter the full path. Every letter matters for the page rules to be applied correctly. You can learn how to create and edit pages at [How to create a new page](#).

Page naming
Page names use the following rules:

• Contain only lowercase letters, numbers, and hyphens.
• No spaces or punctuation characters. Use hyphens to separate words and numbers in the file name.

• Use action verbs that are specific, such as develop, buy, build, troubleshoot. No -ing words.

• No small words - don't include a, and, the, in, or, etc.

• Keep page names reasonably short. They are part of the URL for your articles.

Page path

The page path rules share the same rules as above. Directory-level is separated by a forward slash /, for instance: top-page/sub-page/sub-sub-page/a-directory/my-page

Page title

Page title appears at the top of the page and in navigation. Keep the page title short so it can be fully shown in navigation bar. Use sentence-style capitalisation for page title. See [Microsoft - Capitalisation](#). Occasionally, [title-style capitalisation](#) is appropriate.

Page description

Use sentence-style capitalisation for page description. See [Microsoft - Capitalization](#).

Text styling

Header

- Use H1 for Title: # Title

- Use H2 for Sections: ## Sections

- Use H3 for Sub-sections: ### Sub-sections

Font

When using **Visual Editor** always use the **Default** font for all body text to maintain consistency across all pages.

Font colour

Always use default font colour - which is black. Do not use coloured font.

Italics

Use for files, folders, paths (for long items, split onto their own line) and new terms.
When using for emphasis, use sparingly.

Bold

Use bold style sparingly and only for emphasis.
UI elements should always be written in bold.

Code

Use for inline code, language keywords, NuGet/NPM package names, command-line commands, database table and column names, and URLs that you don't want to be clickable.

Code block

Use for containing a code snippet and highlight the code syntax.

Slashes

There are two types of slashes: a backslash \ and a forward slash /. The backslash is used only for

computer coding. The forward slash, often simply referred to as slash, is a punctuation mark used in English.

When a slash signifies alternatives between only two words, don't use spaces before or after. When using slashes to signify alternatives between multi-word terms, a space before and after the slash makes text easier to read.

Example:

- Two words: and/or

- Multi-words: World War 1 / First World War

Lists

If the list item is a sentence, use sentence capitalization and punctuation. Otherwise, do not use sentence capitalization and punctuation. For example, the following list item is a sentence, so we capitalized the **M** in **Most** and put a period at the end of the sentence:

- Most star fruits have five ridges.

However, the following list item is not a sentence, so we left the **t** in **the** in lowercase and omitted a period:

- the colour of lemons

Number list format

Numbered lists should be written as follows:

1. Item A

2. Item B

3. Item C

Abbreviations

Abbreviations can be written with or without periods, however the use of periods has declined in common use over the past few years. For the sake of consistency, we **will not use** periods in abbreviations.

Here are some correct examples:

- Information Technology - IT

- Human Resources - HR

- Managing Director - MD

- Doctor - Dr

Links

All links must be secure so use https:, not http: whenever the target supports it (which the vast majority should).

Link text

Use the title of the page you are linking to or a short description with normal English words. Do not use "click here."

Correct: See [HealthMetrics website](https://healthmetrics.com/).
Incorrect: Click here https://healthmetrics.com/.

Links from one page to another

We encourage the use of relative links (./ and ../).

- All file paths use forward-slash (/) instead of back-slash characters.

- Link to page in the same directory: [Another page](./another-page)

- Link to page in the parent directory: [Another page](../another-page)

- Link to page in a subdirectory: [Another page](subsection/another-page)

- Link to page in a subdirectory of the parent directory: [Another page](../subsection/another-page)

- Link to page in the parent directory of parent directory: [Another page](../../another-page)

- Link to page in the root directory: [Another page](/another-page)

Images

- Should be clear and with high enough resolution to be readable

- Should not have any borders or shadows

- Should be proportional to the page

- Descriptions should be in italic font

You can upload and host images in HealthMetrics handbook.
Upload the image into ./your-division folder by using the **Assets** tool in the toolbar.
Usage: Use the syntax ![Image Caption](Image Source).

Sometimes images are too large or maybe you want the image to fill up all the available space.
Simply add the dimensions at the end of the image path in the following format:
![Image](/link/to/image.jpg =100x50)

You can also omit one of the values to automatically keep the image ratio:
![Image](/link/to/image.jpg =100x) or ![Image](/link/to/image.jpg =x50)

It's also possible to use other units, like %. Useful when you need the image to take all the available space:
![Image](/link/to/image.jpg =100%x)

Alternative text

To add a short written description of an image which appears during mouseover, simply add the

description after the URL in parentheses:
![Select New Page Location](/company/contributor-guide/hmdocs2.png "Select New Page")

Templates

- [Markdown template](#)

- [Visual Editor template](#)

Page history

All pages must have a **Page history** table inserted at the bottom of the page with the following details:

- Date

- Summary of changes

- Authors full name

Additionally **all ISMS Policy documents** must include the following:

- Approved by *(full name)*

- Approval date

SharePoint

Template
The current document template can be found at [SharePoint](#)

This is the official company template and should be used for all internal Knowledge Base policy documents.

Zendesk

Template

There is no current template for Zendesk documents.

Common writing mistakes

Spelling mistakes
Incorrect: *Watch you're words! Spell-check may not sea words that are miss used because they are spelled rite!*

Correct: *Watch your words! Spellcheck may not see words that are misused because they are spelled right!*

Wordiness
A sentence is wordy if it uses more words than necessary to convey meaning. Wordiness often makes writing unclear.

Incorrect: *Jessica ended up having to walk all the way home due to the fact that she missed the last train leaving Central Station.*

Solution: Identify long phrases that can be replaced with a single word. Eliminate words that have the same meaning. Eliminate weak words, such as "basically" and "sort of." Eliminate nonessential information.

Correct: *Jessica walked home because she missed the last train.*

Comma misuse (inside a compound subject)
Incorrect: *My roommate, and his brother, went to see a movie.*

Correct: *My roommate and his brother went to see a movie.*

No commas around interrupters
Incorrect: *It was unfortunately the end of winter vacation.*

Correct: *It was, unfortunately, the end of winter vacation.*

Subject-verb agreement
Singular subjects take singular verbs and plural subjects take plural verbs.

Incorrect: *Michael study at the library every day.*

Correct: *Michael studies at the library every day.*

Take the Style Guide quiz

In order to maintain your edit access to the handbook, you must achive **100%** in this quiz.

[Style Guide quiz](#)

Good luck with the quiz!